Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

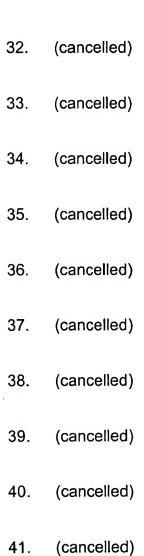
- 1. 27. (cancelled)
- 28. (currently amended) A method of screening a candidate compound for the ability to inhibit dimer assembly and secretion of a dimeric form of interleukin, comprising the steps of:

incubating a cell culture comprising a cell line of Claim 17 transfected with an expression vector comprising DNA encoding a subunit of a dimeric form of interleukin under transcriptional control of an ecdysone-inducible promoter with the candidate compound;

inducing transcription of the dimeric interleukin in the cells of the culture using ecdysone or an ecdysone analog; and

assaying the cell culture for the presence of secreted interleukin.

- 29. (currently amended) A <u>The</u> method as claimed in Claim 28, and in which the interleukin expressed by the cell line has a 6 x histidine amino acid sequence tagged on either or both of the subunits thereof, wherein the assaying step involves Ni-NTA affinity chromatography.
- 30. (currently amended) A <u>The</u> method as claimed in Claim 28 in which the assaying step involves probing the cell culture with an antibody specific to a dimeric form of interleukin, or a subunit thereof.
- 31. (cancelled)



- 42. (new) The method according to Claim 28 wherein the subunit of dimeric form of interleukin is selected from the group consisting of p35 (alpha) subunit of interleukin 12 (IL-12); p40 (beta) subunit of IL-12; p19 chain of IL-23; p40 subunit of IL-23; ebi3 subunit of IL-27; and p28 subunit of IL-27.
- 43. (new) The method according to Claim 28 wherein the cell line is capable of producing heterodimeric IL-12, the cell line being transfected with an expression vector in which the DNA encodes a p40 subunit of IL-12 and an expression vector in which the DNA encodes a p35 subunit of IL-12.

- 44. (new) The method according to Claim 28 wherein the cell line is capable of producing heterodimeric IL-23, the cell line being transfected with an expression vector in which the DNA encodes a p40 subunit of IL-12 and an expression vector in which the DNA encodes a p19 subunit of IL-23.
- 45. (new) The method according to Claim 28 wherein the cell line includes plasmid pVgRxR.
- 46. (new) The method according to claim 28 in which the cell line comprises cells which are human embryonic kidney cells.
- 47. (new) The method according to claim 28 in which the cell line comprises human embryonic kidney cells which include plasmid pVgRxR.
- 48. (new) The method according claim 28 in which the cell line comprises cells which are natural β subunit-producing cells.
- 49. (new) The method according to claim 28 in which the cell line is the cell line having ECACC accession number 03112701.